

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 OES-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 H-01  
EB-08 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00  
/060 W

-----052860 091838Z /47

P 091807Z MAY 78  
FM USMISSION GENEVA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9418

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 07086

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: AORG, WMO  
SUBJECT: WMO SYG POSITION: POTENTIAL US CANDIDATE

REF: STATE 114905

FROM AMB VANDEN HEUVEL

1. I MET WITH SYG DAVIES OF WMO THIS AFTERNOON IN A MOST CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE, AS DIRECTED BY REFTEL. HE REVIEWED HIS INITIAL DETERMINATION TO RETIRE AT THE END OF HIS PRESENT TERM BUT THEN INDICATED THAT HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF MANY COUNTRIES WHO URGED HIM TO RECONSIDER HIS DECISION. HE IS IN THE PROCESS OF DOING SO. THE INDICATIONS ARE THAT HE WILL AT LEAST MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE AS A CANDIDATE, AND MORE LIKELY HE WILL MAKE IT CLEAR THAT HE IS A CANDIDATE. HE SUGGESTED THAT SEVERAL COUNTRIES HAD INDICATED TO HIM THAT HIS CONTINUED SERVICE WOULD HELP AVOID A CLASH BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION OVER THE SUCCESSION AND THAT MANY COUNTRIES FELT THAT CANDIDATES FROM NEITHER "SUPER POWER" SHOULD BE CHOSEN AS WMO SYG.

2. I INDICATED TO HIM THAT THE USG HAS THE HIGHEST  
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CONFIDENCE IN DR. ROBERT WHITE, THAT WE ADMIRE GREATLY WHAT DR. DAVIES HAS DONE IN HIS 24 YEARS AS SYG AND WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT HIM IF HE SEEKS REELECTION. I ALSO BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION, HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY THAT ONE OF HIS GREATEST REMAINING CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE ARRANGING HIS SUCCESSION IN SUCH A WAY SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES AND PROGRAMS HE HAS DEFENDED WILL BE CONTINUED.

I ALSO INDICATED THAT WE WOULD UNDERSTAND HIS DESIRE TO RETIRE FROM ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND THAT THE EMERITUS STATUS THAT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE ACCORDED HIM WOULD PERMIT CONTINUED HIGH LEVEL ACTIVITY WITHOUT THE BURDENS OF ADMINISTRATIVE BOREDOM. HE ASKED WHETHER THE US BELIEVES THAT DR. WHITE COULD BE ELECTED. I REPLIED THAT WE THOUGHT HE HAD A VERY GOOD PROSPECT FOR ELECTION IF DR. DAVIES WERE NOT A CANDIDATE BUT THAT THE PRESENT AMBIGUOUS SITUATION HELPED NO ONE. DR. DAVIES EXPRESSED THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR DR. WHITE AS A PERSON WHO WOULD ASSURE A PROFESSIONAL AND PROGRESSIVE FUTURE FOR WMO. HE SAID THAT HE INTENDED TO MEET INDIVIDUALLY WITH VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND PERHAPS HE WOULD MEET WITH THEM PRIVATELY IN A GENERAL SESSION. THE PRESIDENT OF WMO IS ARRIVING IN GENEVA TODAY. DR. DAVIES INTENDS TO TALK TO HIM. IT APPEARS THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL ENCOURAGE DAVIES TO BE AN ACTIVE CANDIDATE. THE FINAL RESULT IS THAT DAVIES HAS NOT YET MADE A FINAL COMMITMENT BUT THAT HE IS CLEARLY VEERING IN THE DIRECTION OF STANDING FOR REELECTION. HE PROMISED TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH ME AND/OR DR. WHITE AND DR. BENTON WHEN THEY ARRIVE FOR THE EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

3. SINCE THE ELECTION OF THE NEW PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE (PRESUMABLY DR. BENTON) CAN ONLY TAKE PLACE ON THE OPENING DAY (JUNE 6) OF THE FULL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE  
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COMMITTEE. (DAVIES EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WHITE WOULD ATTEND THE PREPARATORY MEETING (MAY 25 THROUGH JUNE 3). THIS CAN BE DONE BY DELAYING THE LETTER OF CHANGE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE WHICH I AM OBLIGED TO SEND TO THE SYG UNTIL JUNE 4 OR 5. VANDEN HEUVEL

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